

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 366 405

JC 940 135

AUTHOR Summer, Jo  
TITLE Improving Communication throughout the Institution: A Unique Approach to Classified Retreats, Sierra Community College.  
PUB DATE 18 Nov 93  
NOTE 39p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Community College League of California (San Francisco, CA, November 18-20, 1993).  
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)  
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.  
DESCRIPTORS Campus Planning; \*College Environment; Community Colleges; \*Employee Attitudes; Program Descriptions; \*School Personnel; \*Staff Development; Two Year Colleges  
IDENTIFIERS \*Retreats; \*Sierra College CA

## ABSTRACT

In spring 1990, the classified staff of the Sierra College Staff Development Committee requested and obtained funding to sponsor four all-day retreats for all classified staff. Participants were assigned to one of the retreats based on their own preferences and an attempt to ensure a cross section of staff at each retreat. As a result of the committee's work with supervisors and reluctant staff, attendance at the retreats reached 88% of all classified staff. The goals of the retreat were to gain better understanding and appreciation of other staff members through sharing job-related issues and concerns, improve communications, make classified staff feel that they make a difference, gain better understanding of the college structure, develop solutions to concerns, and develop a better sense of community. Participants were asked to submit two short statements describing a positive employment-related experience and a concern. Retreat outcomes included the following: (1) there was consensus that concern for the student, friendly caring people, cooperation, communication, support and trust of the supervisor, tools to do the job, having a voice, access to facts, and freedom to make decisions are important in making things work; (2) space, improper use of student help, inadequate staffing, communication, lack of upward mobility, safety, and recognition were among the unresolved issues identified; (3) participants felt that a central information center, increased written communication, and better procedures for disseminating information might be ways of improving communication. Suggestions for improving other problem areas and information about planning and implementing the retreats for all three years, 1991, 1992, and 1993, are included. (AC)

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
\* from the original document. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

# IMPROVING COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE INSTITUTION

ED 366 405

## A UNIQUE APPROACH TO CLASSIFIED RETREATS SIERRA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Jo Summer

PRESENTED AT THE CCLC CONFERENCE  
November 18, 1993

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS  
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Summer

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES  
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as  
received from the person or organization  
originating it.  
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve  
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-  
ment do not necessarily represent official  
OERI position or policy.



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## WHAT MADE IT A SUCCESS?

- Facilitators
- Off-campus/Informal
- Right Numbers
- Visual Recording of All Issues
- Agenda Setting
- Commitments

## **WHAT MADE IT A SUCCESS? continued**

- Lunch
- On a Workday
- Mix of People
- Pre-planning
- Use a Well-planned Time Frame
- Reports

## THE SECRET LIFE OF....

1. Led a tour to London.
2. Almost had drivers lic. suspended for too many speeding tickets.
3. Love to ride horseback.
4. Babysat for player of New Orleans Saints.
5. "Er" used to work for CIA.
6. Used to teach "Danceercise"
7. Broke foot on a motorcycle.
8. Have a cat house...
9. Flooded campus center
10. Sleep w/ lights on when home alone.
11. Sells T-shirts at the mall.
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Starred in play "Twelve Angry Women"
14. Son was born on a hick-a-bod.
15. Going to see A's this season.
16. I play the violin.
17. Used to hitchhike a lot when 14-15 yrs old.
18. WAS A NEGOTIATOR FOR TEAMSTER LOCAL WHEN 27.
19. Lived w/o indoor plumbing & electricity for 4 yrs!
20. \_\_\_\_\_
21. Pea body Hotel in Memphis
22. Won a donkey on "Let's make a Deal"
23. Has been writing a screenplay for 13 yrs - hope to produce/direct
24. Played trumpet & sang w/ dance band.
25. Sung on a swing in an elf suit on a billboard...
26. Used to be a party "animal"
27. Lost my hair piece.
28. Sister-in-law coming from Italy to visit.
29. Always lock self out of house & car!
30. Recipient of the GOLDEN Jock award.
31. Will celebrate 25th wedding anniv. & be a grandparent this year.
32. Going through "change" of life.
33. Has <sup>small</sup> no children or grandchildren but buys baby stuff every time at Macy's.
34. Has 21 nephews & nieces
35. Wanted to be prof. ice skater.
36. Have a dream to be an actor/actress.
37. Getting a new computer toy on web.
38. Nickname is "Scooter"
39. Put a check mark in instructor's book...
40. \_\_\_\_\_

## MATERIALS LIST

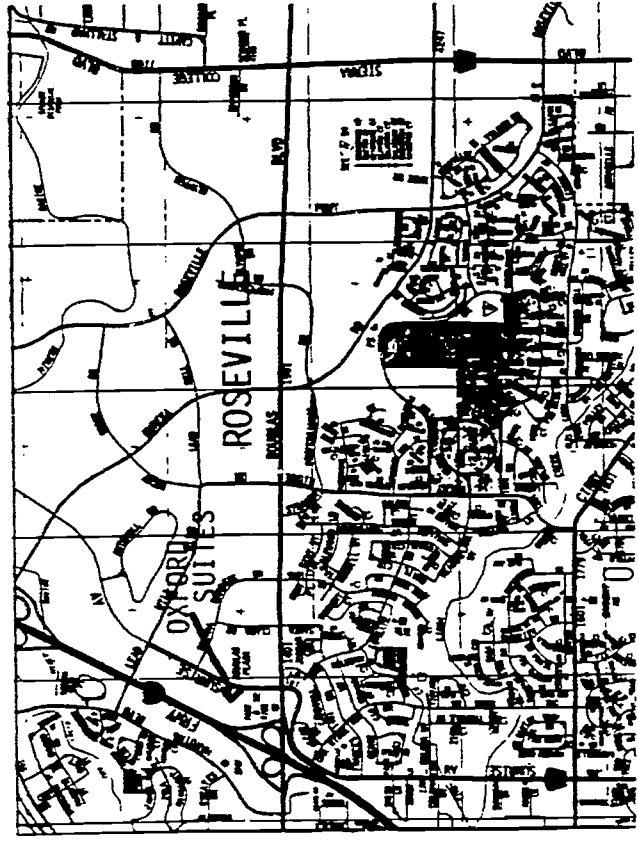
- Handouts Related to Theme
- Chairs in "U" Shape
- Overhead Projector and Stand
- Overhead Projector Pens
- Easel Stands, as many stands as break-out groups
- Flip Charts, as many charts as easel stands plus one or two extras
- Marker Pens of multiple colors, as many sets as break-out groups
- 3 x 5 Cards or Post-Its
- Tacks/Push Pens (if appropriate for room)
- Masking Tape, as many rolls as break-out groups
- Tablets, one for each participant
- Pencils/Pens, one for each participant
- Name Tags, one for each participant with first name in large, easy-to-read type

## Transportation/Time

No district transportation will be provided to Oxford Suites in Roseville. Participants must take their own cars or carpool. Continental breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m. and the program will begin at 8:00 a.m. The approximate ending time will be 4:00 p.m.

## Facility

Oxford Suites is located at 130 North Sunrise Avenue, Roseville, (916) 784-2222. Breakfast and lunch will be provided at the forum. If you have special dietary needs, please contact Janice Barney in the Staff Development Office. Dress comfortably.



# WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## The Second Great Classified Retreat

November 19, 1991

Oxford Suites  
Roseville, California

## Second Great Classified Retreat

This retreat will provide participants with tools and methods for completing projects, solving problems or planning work flow. These tools and methods are applicable and beneficial to all areas in helping improve your work processes.

Miriam Michael, Ph.D., will be the main facilitator for the retreat. Dr. Michael is a trainer in total quality management processes and will bring some valuable expertise to share with us.

This retreat has been planned by classified staff for classified employees and additional facilitators will be from the classified staff.

## Steering Committee

Janice Barney, Annette Blaugrund, Dan Brown, Shelli Burch, Chris Culley, Suzanne Davenport, Jackie Fallon, Al Hooper, Maria Hyde, Joe Malfa, Mary Queener, Shirley Skulis, Catherine Swenson, Sharon Vandagriff, Denelle Wiggins and Joanna Zadra.

## Questions

Please contact Janice Barney, ext. 2467, or Suzanne Davenport, ext. 2564, if you have any questions.

## Schedule of Events

Continental Breakfast	7:30	-	8:00
Introductions/Ice Breaker/ Follow-up Report	8:00	-	9:00
Overview/Introduction to Problem Solving Methods	9:30	-	10:30
Break	10:30	-	10:45
Skills Building/ Breakout Sessions	10:45	-	12:00
Lunch	12:00	-	1:00
Team Application of Tools	1:00	-	2:30
Break	2:30	-	2:45
Planning Process	2:45	-	3:30
Debriefing	3:30	-	4:00

The retreat format has been based on the Educational Leadership Colloquia which were an outgrowth of the Great Teachers Seminar. This format involves the bringing together of diverse groups to discuss common topics.

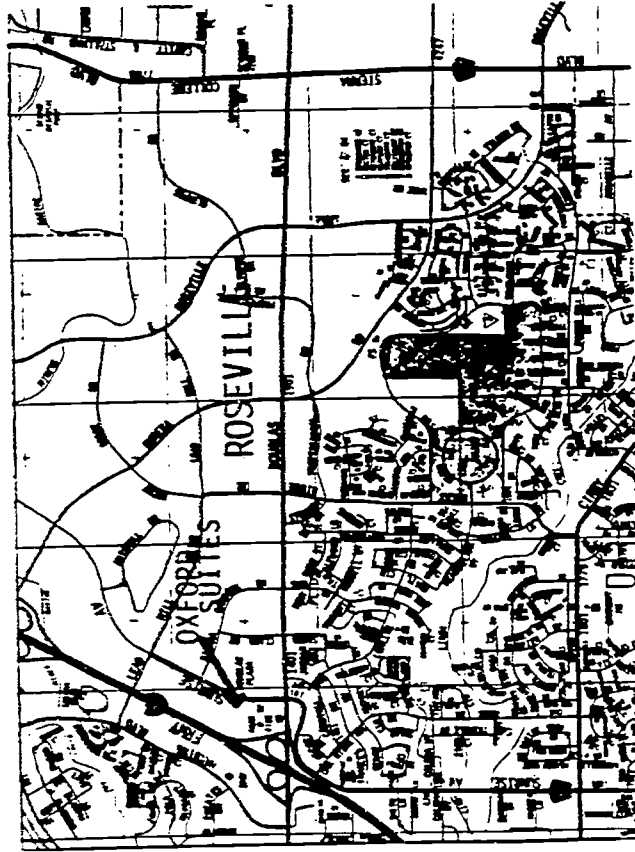


## Transportation/Time

No district transportation will be provided to Oxford Suites in Roseville. Participants must take their own cars or carpool. Continental breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m. and the program will begin at 8:00 a.m. The approximate ending time will be 4:00 p.m.

## Facility

Oxford Suites is located at 130 North Sunrise Avenue, Roseville, (916) 784-2222. Breakfast and lunch will be provided at the forum. If you have special dietary needs, please contact Janice Barney in the Staff Development Office. Dress comfortably.



# WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## The Second Great Classified Retreat

March 4, 1992  
Oxford Suites  
Roseville, California

## Second Great Classified Retreat

This retreat will provide participants with tools and methods for completing projects, solving problems or planning work flow. These tools and methods are applicable and beneficial to all areas in helping improve your work processes.

This retreat has been planned by classified staff for classified employees and the facilitators will be:

- Catherine Swenson
- Joe Hoover
- Sue Jensen
- Shari Jones
- Sally Shackel

## Steering Committee

Janice Barney, Annette Blaugrund, Dan Brown, Shelli Burch, Chris Culley, Suzanne Davenport, Jackie Fallon, Al Hooper, Maria Hyde, Joe Malfa, Mary Queener, Shirley Skulis, Catherine Swenson, Sharon Vandagriff, Denelle Wiggins and Joanna Zadra.

## Questions

- 1.3 Please contact Janice Barney, ext. 2467, or Suzanne Davenport, ext. 2564, if you have any questions.

## Schedule of Events

Continental Breakfast	7:30	-	8:00
Morning Session	8:00	-	12:00
• Introductions			
• Ice Breaker			
• Follow-up Report			
• Overview			
• Introduction to Problem Solving Methods			
• Skills Building			
• Breakout Sessions			

Lunch

12:00 - 1:00

Afternoon Session

1:00 - 4:00

- Team Application of Tools
- Planning Process
- Debriefing

The retreat format has been based on the Educational Leadership Colloquia which were an outgrowth of the Great Teachers Seminar. This format involves the bringing together of diverse groups to discuss common topics.

**Don't forget to bring your handout with you to the retreat.**

### RETREAT EVALUATION

1. Were the goals of event clearly stated?

NO = 12                      YES = 9

2. In your opinion, were the stated goals met?

NO = 9                      YES = 8                      SOMEWHAT = 3

3. Were the directions clearly explained?

NO = 12                      YES = 8                      SOMEWHAT = 1

4. Were the handouts useful and pertinent to the presentation?

NO = 5                      YES = 9                      SOMEWHAT = 7

5. Were the S.C. facilitator helpful and appropriate?

NO = 4                      YES = 12                      SOMEWHAT = 3

6. What activity worked best?

Lunch; lunch; lecture and the ending presentations of the breakout groups; group activity (there was really only one) might have worked better if "leadership" were helpful; none; getting to know others better; learning problem solving methods - how to attack a problem; having small groups; breakout group - our group made a commitment to meet again to follow up on our solution to the problem we discussed; they all worked well; introductions and informal mingling; working through the process on a specific problem was very instructive - group work was great; another topic - otherwise, they were great - working in small groups practicing the process; no comment; none; overall group, lecture and discussion; once groups were formed, the brainstorming to bring the group to consensus seemed to work the best; no comment; lunch; I enjoyed the people part of the day the most, so I would say that lunch was great and so was the small group setting - I also enjoyed the "get to know each other" introductions; going through the steps

7. What activity didn't work?

The approach of having the groups work independently and solve their own problems, making them use unfamiliar concepts; majority of groups needed an assigned facilitator, need for blindfolds unclear; the door to the sauna room; see number 6 (group activity might have worked better if leadership were helpful; the stupid blindfold fiasco, it made me feel as if I were in kindergarten; the blind walk to lunch, no one got the point and it took an extra fifteen to thirty minutes, she had to explain the purpose which had

little impact; bandanna walk; some people said that they didn't think this retreat was as good as the last one - but I don't know what they were talking about, maybe they only wanted to be entertained; none; blind walk (please never again); the blindfold act was not cool - before that we were all feeling sort of excited with out work, and they we felt childish - dumb idea; the bandanna would have had significance if it had been discussed after the exercise - in isolation it seemed senseless or confusing; blindfold walk - dangerous and pointless; all, but lunch; blind mans walk - it was overdone, presented a safety hazard, and lacked clear meaning; several people were upset with the blindfolding prior to lunch, it might have been better had the intent of the exercise been explained right afterward, also, some groups appeared totally frustrated by the lack of direction during the day; no comment; being blindfolded; the blindfold walk to lunch did not work for me, I heard others say they enjoyed it; no comment.

8. What recommendations would you make to improve the event?

To not use this approach again - last years was a lot better and more effective; not allow retreats to be used as forums for lobbying bargainable issues - different method for formation of small groups - instructional handouts given before arrival of retreat; not restrict people to one group for the whole day or maybe a two part workshop; use a primary facilitator who would not become impatient - and yes, irritated when asked to explain - also, train the others, make sure they understand; do not waste the money on an outside facilitator - she hadn't a clue as to what was happening on our campus - it was too generic, and again, unrealistic; no comment; use problem areas through prior to meeting survey; maybe have participants fill out a short questionnaire at the beginning of the day to see their attitude and expectations, then fill out another at the end to see if their attitude changed; have them during school vacations; more involvement of S.C. facilitator - less central power (the presenter); no comment; the event was excellent in terms of usefulness and presentation; give handouts ahead of time - spend all morning teaching TQM and the afternoon for the sessions; go back to the other format, more things were accomplished and the speaker made us still feel stupid; only one person should act as both facilitator and leader; cancel this event entirely or use S.C. personnel as facilitator and leader/coordinators; the facilitator should be very clear as to what the goals of the events are to be; be more positive; give task oriented assignment; make handouts available earlier - rotate groups.

# CLASSIFIED RETREAT EVALUATION

March 4, 1992

N=20

1. Were the goals of event clearly stated?

No 0 Yes 18

The schedule of events was clearly outlined.

Very much so.

Being familiar with TQM, I was completely familiar.

Not before the retreat, but they were explained once we got here.

2. In your opinion, were the goals met?

No 0 Yes 19

All topics were covered well.

The emphasis was on learning to use the tools, rather than to solve any long term existing problems.

Definitely!

3. Were the directions clearly explained?

No 0 Yes 20

I enjoyed Catherine's and Jo's examples and humor.

Examples were very good.

It was a bit difficult to see how the flow chart could be applied to a problem until we started doing one, i.e., the directions were clear, but the actual process made them clearer.

Plenty of time for questions.

4. Were the handouts useful and pertinent to the presentation?

No 0 Yes 11

Handouts were excellent, and I plan to continue using them.

I will keep all of them on my desk.

I plan on using the charts and explanations on my job daily. I can apply of these problem solving tools to many areas of my life. It breaks things down into bite-size chunks.

Very helpful.

Definitely!

4. Were the handouts useful and pertinent to the presentation? continued

Very much so.

Very. (2)

Very helpful--also for future use.

Definitely helped in break-out groups.

Extremely.

5. Were the Sierra College facilitators helpful and appropriate?

No 0 Yes 13

I thought the facilitators did a very good job.

Both Jo and Catherine were very helpful.

They were wonderful! I was most impressed with their positive attitude and emphasis that everyone on campus, management, faculty and classified were as a whole willing to work together. They stressed positive communication and emphasized working on the PROCESS, rather than attacking people.

Excellent facilitators. (2)

? I was a facilitator.

Very knowledgeable.

Everyone seemed very informed.

Very good.

6. What activity worked best?

I thought all activities worked well. It was evident that a lot of effort went into the presentation as well as the handout materials.

Brainstorming for use of styrofoam cup. (2)

Each was effective and appropriate. I liked the brainstorming emphasis. We sometimes forget to seek others for help, as though we were on an island called "my desk." I also thought the charting, problems solving groups did quite well.

Flow charts. (3)

The day fit together very well.

Charts practical activity.

Fish diagram.

Flow charts were very pertinent to all group members. "Shared secrets" were a good resource for getting acquainted.

When brainstorming and the cup.

6. What activity worked best? continued

Practicing with charts.

Small break-out groups at the end helped me understand the use of tools.

Break out, activities participation.

Brainstorming.

Learning to use the tools.

All of them.

All interactive activities.

Groups.

7. What activity didn't work?

None. (10)

All seemed to work well.

You did not have an activity that I did not find helpful.

They all emphasized the tools.

A little confusion on defining problems vs solutions.

Small groups when one person "took over" and a few people said nothing.

Needed more time for small group activity.

I can't think of anything.

Could have had more time. Principles were clear though.

All worked.

8. What recommendations would you make to improve the event?

None. (6)

I thought the retreat was excellent--cannot think of any recommendations for improvement.

Need some way to move around a little at some point or points during day.

I would start the "wrap up" discussion a little sooner. I'd even take a shorter lunch to do so.

Keep it as is. Close to home, relaxed atmosphere, joking appropriately, food served, etc.

Insist all staff are schedule for at least one annual retreat!!

I would like time to work out specific problems with the people in my area. I wish that my co-workers had gone through this process with me and heard it from the presenters. I don't think that they will be open to outlining our problems on charts if I present this suggestion, but they would listen to the presenters.

8. What recommendations would you make to improve the event? continued

Have one every six months with different focus.

More ways to help limit problems (get away from generalizations)--practice.

Everything was great.

Shorter time frame and little more variety in activities.

Training was a great way to go.

Maybe outside sometime, weather permitting.

9. Overall reaction to the event?

"Positive!" a) Enjoy meeting new staff and getting to know others better; b) promotes harmony among the different departments on campus. We all have a better understanding of each other's jobs; c) I am always receptive to learning new ways to manage workload.

Very enjoyable and informative day that produced a feeling of camaraderie among the participants.

Had a great day! Lots of fun.

Great chance to get away from work for the day, meet co-workers and learn new skills to enhance my job. I had a great day, thanks!

Fun, informative and practical!!!! Hooray for Catherine and Jo!!!!

Great! Be sure to include description of shared governance.

It gave me the push to keep going on my processes! (flow charts, etc.)

Good! Positive. I would like to come again..

I have enjoyed both retreats I've been to--very helpful and motivating as well as increasing group cohesion.

Great!

Excellent! (2)

Great. Hopefully there will be more.

Very positive.

Great! Thanks!

Good.

Very worthwhile.

Scale of 1 to 10: 9

Very good, very beneficial.

Very beneficial.



# 1992-93 Classified Retreats

## WORKING "WELL" TOGETHER

March 12, 1993

8:00 - 9:00	Introductions/Welcome, Dr. Angove		
9:00 - 10:00	Styles for Success, Catherine Swenson		
10:00 - 10:15	Break		
10:30 - 11:30	Co-Dependency in the Workplace, Mary Moon How to stop resenting your job. How to stop trying to solve your family of origin issues on your job. How to start being who you are on your job.		
11:30 - 12:15	Lunch		
AFTERNOON SESSION			
	Roseville Room	Sunrise Room	Douglas Room
12:30 - 1:25	Humor in the Workplace <i>Diane Carlson</i> Explore, fun, non-threatening group activities that promote creativity, spontaneity, and defusing anxiety, all ingredients of positive humor. We will discover the value of humor in your personal and professional environments. You will come away with a list of practical suggestions for enhancing the comic in the workplace. Join us for a pleasurable, meaningful two hours.	Let's Get in Touch - <i>Linda Wood</i> Massage is one of the easiest ways of attaining and maintaining good health. Headaches and pains, insomnia, tension and stress can all be alleviated with one simple instrument—our hands. Come join us for this fun, informative and relaxing hour.	
1:30 - 2:25		Healing the Body/Mending the Mind - <i>Michelle DeVol</i> The trend of the nineties is developing toward a holistic attitude combining exercise, diet and techniques that mend and strengthen both the mind and the body. This workshop will focus on new ideas and directions in total health and fitness.	Tai Chi <i>Karen Hodge/Scott Berry</i> This workshop will focus on temple exercises (warm-up), with an emphasis on breathing techniques.
2:25 - 2:40	Break		
2:40 - 3:35	Art Therapy <i>Dotty Brown</i> Give up a problem to a piece of art! Relieve stress and explore your creative potential by creating a collage self-portrait. No previous art experience necessary!	Let's Get in Touch - <i>Linda Wood</i> Massage is one of the easiest ways of attaining and maintaining good health. Headaches and pains, insomnia, tension and stress can all be alleviated with one simple instrument—our hands. Come join us for this fun, informative and relaxing hour.	Tai Chi <i>Karen Hodge/Scott Berry</i> This workshop will focus on temple exercises (warm-up), with an emphasis on breathing techniques.
3:35 - 4:00	Wrap-Up, Sunrise/Douglas Room		

# 1992-93 Classified Retreats WORKING "WELL" TOGETHER

March 26, 1993

8:00 - 9:00	Introductions/Welcome, Dr. Angove		
9:00 - 9:45	Styles for Success, Catherine Swenson		
9:45 - 10:00	Break		
10:00 - 11:30	Co-Dependency in the Workplace, Mary Moon How to stop resenting your job. How to stop trying to solve your family of origin issues on your job. How to start being who you are on your job.		
11:30 - 12:15	Lunch		
AFTERNOON SESSION			
	Roseville Room	Sunrise Room	Douglas Room
12:30 - 1:25	Humor in the Workplace <i>Diane Carlson</i> Explore, fun, non-threatening group activities that promote creativity, spontaneity, and defusing anxiety, all ingredients of positive humor. We will discover the value of humor in your personal and professional environments. You will come away with a list of practical suggestions for enhancing the comic in the workplace. Join us for a pleasurable, meaningful two hours.	Let's Get in Touch - <i>Linda Wood</i> Massage is one of the easiest ways of attaining and maintaining good health. Headaches and pains, insomnia, tension and stress can all be alleviated with one simple instrument--our hands. Come join us for this fun, informative and relaxing hour.	Eating and Exercise--What are the Right Choices? - <i>Gary Judd</i> This workshop will focus on new ideas and directions in total health and fitness.
1:30 - 2:25		Stress Management <i>Cathy Sylvia, SIG</i> Work can be hazardous to your health, both physical and mental. Learn practical ways to defuse the stress on the job; how to relax and enjoy your environment wherever you are. This session will include fatigue-combating techniques that can be done at your desk. You will come away relaxed, refreshed and ready to face your stressors head-on.	Eating and Exercise--What are the Right Choices? - <i>Gary Judd</i> This workshop will focus on new ideas and directions in total health and fitness.
2:25 - 2:40	Break		
2:40 - 3:35	Tai Chi <i>Karen Hodge/Scott Berry</i> This workshop will focus on temple exercises (warm-up), with an emphasis on breathing techniques.	Let's Get in Touch - <i>Linda Wood</i> Massage is one of the easiest ways of attaining and maintaining good health. Headaches and pains, insomnia, tension and stress can all be alleviated with one simple instrument--our hands. Come join us for this fun, informative and relaxing hour.	Art Therapy - <i>Dotty Brown</i> Give up a problem to a piece of art! Relieve stress and explore your creative potential by creating a collage self-portrait. No previous art experience necessary!
3:35 - 4:00	Wrap-Up, Sunrise/Douglas Room		

# CLASSIFIED RETREAT EVALUATION

March 12, 1993

N=32

Please rate how well the goals of the retreat have been met:

	<u>Low</u>							<u>High</u>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Were the goals of the day clearly stated?					1	10	21	
2. In your opinion, were the stated goals met?					1	9	22	
3. Were you able to gain a better understanding and appreciation of one another?					2	12	18	
4. A major purpose of the retreat was to encourage each participant to be more responsible for their wellness in the workplace. How well did this retreat meet this purpose for you?					2	12	18	
5. Did you learn something new as a result of this retreat? Yes <u>31</u> No <u>1</u>								
6. Can you apply what you learned on your job? Yes <u>31</u> No <u>      </u>								
• Making myself a healthier, happier person in general will help me on my job.								
7. What activity worked best?								
• Healing the Mind/Mending the Body (7)								
• Stress relief								
• Co-dependency (4)								
• Thinker, Director, Socializer, Relator								
• Massage (4)								
• Humor in the Workplace (4)								
• Self-esteem promotion								
• Workshops								
• Styles for Success								
• Enjoyed and learned from the exchange of concerns and possible methods of coping with them.								
• Guessing the secrets of other people was fun!								
• Personality - good start for day's activities.								
• Upbeat focus on staff, not problems								
• Work styles of myself and co-workers								
• Catherine Swenson's workshop and the workshop afterwards by the health and tobacco people were excellent! They never got to make their points, though. We had just barely started, and it was over.								
8. What activity could have worked better?								
• Tai Chi - more room (7)								
• Tai Chi								
• Co-dependency - needed more time (5)								
• Co-dependency (3)								
• Job counseling								
• They were all great!								

Results of March 12, 1993, Classified Retreat

Page 1

8. continued--What activity could have worked better?

- More time
- Massage - more time (2)
- Art therapy
- I liked everything just as it was.
- Secrets - shorter time
- What I saw worked great.

9. What recommendations would you make to improve the event for the future?

- Format that allows attendance at each workshop. (3)
- Give more time for people to express themselves.
- More time for lead speakers or break-out practice sessions.
- More time to do everything.
- Maybe trying to reach others in a different way for those who really need it.
- Need to get the people that really need this here. How? Good question.
- Larger area for Tai Chi. (3)
- This was great! Good job!
- More focus on handling some of the shared problems in the workplace. I felt that at least one participant was in a very, very poor work situation and wanted our help. I hope we didn't leave her hanging.
- Make a longer flex activity for some sessions.
- I thought all areas were well thought out and planned and participated in.
- More people from different areas.
- It would have been nice to incorporate the personality test material.
- More time with health oriented activities.
- Enjoyed having all classified together instead of mixed with faculty, more freedom to be honest.
- Small group's counseling.
- More wellness activities.
- Closer rest rooms.
- More time for each workshop. We really needed a full session (three hours or so) for the morning guest speakers.
- More time for massage and co-dependency.

10. Should we offer these types of workshops throughout the year? Yes 30 No 1  
If yes, what topics, issues, format, frequency, etc., would you suggest.

- Co-dependency (3)
- More self esteem (2)
- Helping departments understand roles, functions, and activities other departments.
- Self-massage techniques - twice a year.
- I would like at least one event that is physical but that everyone can still participate in.
- Twice a year is good - How to improve relations with supervisors.
- They don't have to be all day - like flex except not during peak times.
- Wellness class (2)
- Stress Management (2)
- Feedback to managers and up.
- Once a year is great.
- All, it's all renewal therapy.
- Once or twice a year seems sufficient.
- Small groups (8-10) to handle those common problems at work; we need to benefit from others' experiences.
- Once a year is fine. A variety of topics is more interesting.
- Every workshop should have a section on this wellness theme as a reminder we can be healthier, happier, and we have control. It doesn't have to always be so long, just a reminder.
- How to work with people who are always the problem and refuse to acknowledge.
- All of what we did today.

10. continued--Should we offer these types of workshops throughout the year? If yes, what topics, issues, format, frequency, etc., would you suggest.

- Continued use of knowledgeable staff members at Sierra, opportunity each semester.
- How to get organized - learning the functions of other departments.
- One retreat "concept" given twice to allow everyone to attend is enough for one year.
- Wellness workshops once a month--like Barbara's (Dawson) teaching tips with a schedule so people can plan ahead.

11. Overall reaction to the event?

- Great! (5)
- One of the best.
- Good (2)
- Excellent (2)
- Very good (2)
- Love it!
- Wonderful (3)
- Very informative
- Enjoyed it all, very interesting.
- It has been a relaxing, profitable day. Hopefully, I will be a more relaxed, better, and more efficient employee.
- Great retreat, nice to see everyone off campus and get to know them in the "real world."
- Very worthwhile, gained insight into self and others.
- Great participation
- Interesting, educational and personally beneficial, fun.
- Had a great time! Interaction with other co-workers was nice.
- All presenters were impressive.
- Good interaction among employees.
- A great day.
- Wonderful! The best so far.
- Excellent! Let's do it again. I wanted to attend everything but couldn't.
- It was wonderful! I'll recommend it highly to those going in two weeks.

12. Comments:

- Enjoyed chance to meet with other classified employees.
- Planning of retreat was excellent - workshop leaders were SUPER.
- Concern: Do we want to encourage religious-based training such as Tai Chi and New Age. If so, access should be allowed to all without selective exclusion.
- We sure had a good crew.
- Thanks to Staff Development and all the organizers and facilitators. (2)
- Presenters were very well-prepared. Marvelous concept. More time needed for co-dependency presenters.
- Thank you FUSE and everyone who helped with the retreat.
- They're getting better.
- I wish I could have done it all.
- If I have a problem, who do I see?
- It was my first retreat. It was a good experience.
- Linda's and Michelle's workshops were great! Lunch was good too.
- I would like us to explore more ways to work well together, to handle problems (specific ones), and to improve our health. Good job!
- Thanks very much--we really have a great staff at Sierra.
- Bravo! Thank you!
- Instructors were very good.
- Staff Development should consider having a workshop on self-esteem.

# CLASSIFIED RETREAT EVALUATION

March 26, 1993

N=35

Please rate how well the goals of the retreat have been met:

	<u>Low</u> 1	2	3	4	5	6	<u>High</u> 7
1. Were the goals of the day clearly stated?			1		2	16	14
2. In your opinion, were the stated goals met?					4	16	15
3. Were you able to gain a better understanding and appreciation of one another?					7	12	16
4. A major purpose of the retreat was to encourage each participant to be more responsible for their wellness in the workplace. How well did this retreat meet this purpose for you?					7	17	10
5. Did you learn something new as a result of this retreat? Yes <u>35</u> No <u>    </u>							
6. Can you apply what you learned on your job? Yes <u>35</u> No <u>    </u>							
7. What activity worked best?							
• Humor in the work place and Tai Chi							
• Massage therapy and Mary Moon's talk (2)							
• Stress management							
• Tai Chi (6)							
• Massage and Stress management							
• Massage (7)							
• Styles for success (5)							
• Let's get in touch							
• Styles and Co-dependency							
• Eating and Exercise (2)							
• Art class							
• Co-dependency (2)							
• Secrets							
• Do you know why it couldn't begin on time? It would be much improved if it was just an hour shorter.							
8. What activity could have worked better?							
• Stress management - introduction stuff was too long, but fun. I felt presenters were rushed in a.m.							
• Stress management (3)							
• Co-dependency - needed more time							
• Massage (2) - needed more time							
• People should be prepared to turn in their cards with a secret when they register to save time or else there needs to be a quicker way to get started. I really <u>liked</u> that for an ice breaker.							
• Massage therapy							
• Collage							
• Morning presentations							



9. What recommendations would you make to improve the event for the future?

- None
- Different orientation to relax and acquaint participants
- Having them twice a year; getting away from work with co-workers; laughter is therapy
- A presentation workshop - voice, expressions, hand gestures, physical and how it turns other people on and off. One presenter has a very high, difficult-to-listen-to voice, and this can be easily solved by register exercises.
- More participants
- Allow more time for massage
- Felt morning workshops were repetitious of prior workshops and counselling programs I've attended
- More time per sessions
- Allow more time for the afternoon sessions and do this retreat more often, like twice a year
- Get started on time so the main speakers don't have to shorten their presentation
- More healthy snacks (less sugar)
- How about a follow-up on the same theme with more in-depth Tai Chi and some other massage like reflexology and maybe acupressure too.
- More comfortable seating
- None - I thought it was excellent.

10. Should we offer these types of workshops throughout the year? Yes 33 No 1

If yes, what topics, issues, format, frequency, etc., would you suggest.

- Very informative and enjoyable
- It was great! (3)
- Excellent (2)
- I was impressed and very relaxed.
- Personal development; self-esteem; communication; assertiveness
- Yearly - it's too hard to get people to go more frequently
- Another art class
- Monthly
- All
- Ways to work smarter, not harder
- Half day retreats would be nice (on Friday afternoons); more stress management and communication
- Workshops, maybe flex activities such as computer applications
- Opportunities and requirements for advancement; retirement explanation
- Try to encourage all new employees to participate - contact them personally if necessary
- Extensions of today's events

11. Overall reaction to the event?

- I thoroughly enjoyed the retreat - wish more of my fellow employees could have come
- Positive
- Excellent and fun
- Nice change of pace, enjoyed the casual setting
- Very positive. This was the best retreat I have attended. It had a more relaxed pace which was more conducive to absorbing the ideas presented.
- Positive
- Very good
- Excellent, an exciting but relaxing day
- Well done
- Really enjoyed participating
- Good
- Very positive
- It was very relaxing to get to know more people and learn different events through workshops
- Great
- This retreat was much more informative than previous years.
- Feel more comfortable around those whom I didn't know
- Great day

## 12. Comments:

- Great choice of activities and facilitators; first retreat where I had so much fun
- Great having staff do activities - such diverse talent
- I had a wonderful time. It was fun and informative. Try to start on time.
- Thanks for all your hard work.
- It would be nice to have this activity during Christmas break so we don't have to take off from work.
- I appreciate Sierra College offering this event and "thank you" to all the people that put this together.
- Physical things and hands-on things really work well.
- It was great to have a Classified workshop put on by Classified; nice job!
- Great to meet other Classified employees.
- Keep the retreats coming
- More information in the same vein as presented by Mary Moon
- Workshops were better than the "stated goals"
- Great food; good variety of activities
- Facilitators were very informative
- Objective of "wellness on job" was met



**SIERRA COLLEGE**

*Staff Development Committee*

**T . H . E  
G R E A T  
CLASSIFIED  
RETREAT**

**F I N A L  
R E P O R T  
1 9 9 1**

# THE GREAT CLASSIFIED RETREAT

In the spring of 1990, the classified staff of the Sierra College Staff Development Committee requested funding to sponsor an event for all classified staff. The committee's agreement to fund this project set into motion a momentous task which proved to be monumentally successful.

## Background

After approval was granted, a subcommittee of classified staff prepared a well thought-out foundation. First, they made a presentation to the Executive Council (President, Vice Presidents, and Dean of Research and Planning) to gain support. They notified every supervisor of the concept and requested that the President write a memorandum to all supervisors encouraging support for the project. They surveyed the staff to determine the best dates and times for the retreats.

After several days of discussion, the subcommittee determined that the format from the Great Teachers Seminar should be adapted to four, all-day workshops off campus, but no farther than 45 minutes away. Meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks) would be provided at all four retreats. The Executive Council preferred that the workshops be held within the District if possible.

The four dates selected were August 16, October 12, November 7, and January 11. The staff were asked their preference for the dates and, where possible, were assigned to their first choice. The participants for each session were carefully selected to make sure that those attending represented a cross section of all the classified staff. Considerations were given to geographical work area, job category, gender, level of participation in campus activities, work schedules, and job relationships. The last retreat had the largest number of participants because of rescheduling those staff members who were unable to attend a previous retreat for a variety of reasons.

Prior to each retreat, supervisors received a list of the staff in his/her area who would be attending. This was followed up by a personal visit from a member of the committee to assure the cooperation of the supervisor. For those reluctant to attend, there were personal contacts from members of the committee, support from the supervisor to attend, contact with known confidants, and repeated calls encouraging them to attend. As a result, 145 classified staff members (88%) attended one of the four retreats.



## Goals

The subcommittee determined that the purpose of the retreats was to encourage each participant to feel more enthusiastic, interested and valued as a Sierra College classified staff member. The following goals were established:

- to gain better understanding and appreciation of one another through sharing job-related issues and concerns
- to know one another better
- to improve communications
- to make classified staff feel that they make a difference
- to gain better knowledge and understanding of the College structure
- to develop solutions to concerns
- to become a more effective and involved member of the Sierra College family

## Format

Staffing Each retreat had a lead facilitator who managed the flow of the agenda, explained each activity and the ground rules, kept time, and facilitated the group sessions. The first three retreats were staffed with three additional facilitators allowing the afternoon to be split into two sessions of four breakouts each. The final retreat had a total of seven facilitators because of the larger number in attendance. In addition to the facilitators, each retreat had a designated person from the subcommittee to coordinate the break and meal functions and any other needs related to facility/set up. There was also a person to facilitate and keep track of the number of people who rode the bus.

Papers Each participant was asked to submit a short statement describing a positive experience which made him/her feel like a valued member of the Sierra College family and another short statement of a contrary thought describing an area that remained a concern. This set the stage for each participant to begin thinking about contributing before attending. The papers were used later as a springboard into the discussion for the day.

Getting There Participants were asked to ride the bus to the event. On boarding, name tags were distributed and participants were asked to sit with someone they didn't know or didn't know very well. Since one major goal of the retreats was to

increase communication, the bus ride began the informal networking that is an integral part of the Great Teachers' Format.

Introductions Each retreat officially began with an introduction exercise. Participants were asked to interview someone they didn't know or didn't know very well and then introduce that person to the entire group. This strategy continued the informal networking with the expectation of continued contact once back on campus.

Ground Rules The lead facilitator explained to the participants that rather than having speakers, each person attending was an expert. The issues and topics of discussion for the event were to be generated by the discussion in the first two sessions. The key to the process is that each participant is an equal; everyone speaks; everyone listens; no one should go home with second thoughts and not having spoken up. Above all, there would be no whining! There would be a clear, succinct description of the problem and then the focus would be on possible solutions.

Sessions During the first session, carefully selected groups discussed their positive thoughts and why things worked. The focus of this was to identify the attributes of good working relationships on campus. The second session (again the groups were carefully selected to make sure that everyone was comfortable about speaking openly) focused on descriptions of the major issues of concern.

Voting to Determine Remaining Agenda After the first two sessions, while participants were enjoying lunch, the facilitators got together to sort out the common issues which evolved from the breakout groups. These were presented to the entire group, and the group was given an opportunity to add items to the list. To determine the remaining agenda, the participants voted on the topics, and depending on the remaining time and number of facilitators, the topics with the most votes became the afternoon breakout sessions. With these sessions, participants were invited to "vote with their feet" by attending sessions of their choice, say what they wanted to say, listen to what they wanted to hear, and go to another session if they chose. Again, the focus was not to complain about the problems, but to clarify the issues and suggest possible solutions.

Reporting Back An important element in the retreat process was to report the outcomes of the discussions in the breakouts to the entire group so everyone had an opportunity to react and add to the suggestions already made during the breakout sessions.

Commitments The final activity before adjourning was for each participant to make a commitment to do something in the future as a result of the retreat activities. The purpose was to have some impact for the institution beyond mere attendance.

Follow Up A few days after each retreat, the subcommittee hand delivered a mug, a flower, and a certificate of attendance to serve as a permanent reminder of the

event. In addition, it was to be a reminder that the participants made a commitment to continue the work begun at the retreat.

## **WHAT HAPPENED**

Common threads ran through all four retreats. The faces changed but the issues ultimately remained the same. (Note, not necessarily in priority order.)

### **What makes things work!**

- Concern for the student
- Friendly, caring people
- Cooperation
- Communication among the parties involved
- Respect and value for the skills of each individual
- Support, respect, and trust of the supervisor
- Tools to do the job
- Having a voice/vote in money decisions, equipment decisions, and hiring decisions
- Access to facts
- Freedom to make a decision to meet the needs of the student

### **Unresolved Issues!**

- SPACE, SPACE, AND MORE SPACE
- Improper use of casual/work study/student help
- Inadequate staffing in many areas
- Process--lack of understanding of what the processes are and the slowness of the processes they do understand
- Communication
- Lack of upward mobility
- Safety
- Supervisory skills and need for supervisory training
- Recognition, trust, and responsibility

### **Suggestions!**

#### Communication

Develop a central information center. Make sure the people staffing the information center are knowledgeable and have access to all the information, forms, etc.

Written communication of decisions to all who are affected.

Regular information about events/processes disseminated in a more frequent, less expensive format.

All staff need to understand that we all need to take responsibility in getting the information out AND collecting and reading all the information that is already available.

Develop strategies for dealing with rumor.

Develop a procedure and flow of information and try to get everyone to understand.

Develop a liaison system.

A smile is contagious.

### Space

Work on a coordinated long-range plan which includes a good analysis of space usage. Gain input/review from a variety of areas for a fresh approach.

Develop the recognition that the space belongs to the whole college, not the individual. Avoid territorialism.

Creative scheduling; forcing (in a nice way) instructors and staff to use the non-prime time hours for classes and work.

Hold a house cleaning day and have a great furniture swap.

Consult an efficiency expert.

### Staff and Workload

Develop a job-shadowing program to train people to step from one job to another to fill in peaks and valleys in workload.

Develop a replacement policy to insure that vacancies are filled promptly.

Do a comprehensive campuswide workload study with the idea of developing a floater pool staffed with permanent, part-time employees who are trained in several areas and can fill in as necessary.

Develop a training process for new hires to bring them into the system more quickly.

Establish a mentor system for new employees.

Look into the state of California system for promotions from within to help develop a system for upward mobility.

Develop on-the-job training programs.

### Health and Safety

Safety needs to be a high priority.

Provide information regarding the process for reporting items to the Safety Committee and clarify its role on campus.

Develop an up-to-date emergency manual including fire drill procedure. Actually hold a few fire drills.

Purchase some informational films on safety issues in the workplace and establish a series of workshops on safety in the workplace.

Identify a person in each geographical location as the safety person of the month to facilitate any problems that may occur.

### Recognition/Trust/Responsibility

Try talking directly to the person involved.

Extend yourself to others; take the first step.

Need supervisors to have leadership, people and management skills. Provide a program of training if they need it based on a constructive evaluation system.

Develop a series of recognition programs within work areas and across the campus.

Remember to say "Thank you."

Develop a campuswide attitude of consultation with everyone and a trust for the good of collective thinking.

There needs to be more contact with each other in order to develop an understanding of the other's role and responsibilities.

### Students

Try to create an attitude of user friendly.

Improve the campus signs so they are in a logical format.

Provide the college catalog and maps in areas of heavy traffic.

Develop an information kiosk or booth with staff especially at the beginning of each semester.

Develop a volunteer system of information givers at the beginning of each semester with easily identifiable attire.

Develop an easy-to-understand one-page flier to explain the registration process.

Give the campus sidewalks and roads names and erect signposts and "you are here" maps throughout the campus.

Paint arrows on the sidewalk to get from Admissions and Records and Counseling as they do for getting to visitors' parking.

## **EVALUATION**

At the end of each retreat participants were asked to complete an evaluation form (see next page).

Question 1 asked participants to rate how well the goals of the retreat had been met, ranking each individual goal on a scale of 1 (poor) to 7 (exceptional). Question 2 asked how well the retreat had met its purpose of making participants feel more enthusiastic, interested and valued and also used a scale of 1 (no change) to 7 (greatly improved). Question 3 asked if the retreats should be repeated, and question 4 asked for general comments.



**SIERRA COLLEGE  
CLASSIFIED RETREAT - JANUARY 11, 1991  
EVALUATION**

1. Please rate how well the goals of the retreat have been met.

	Poor	Adequate				Exceptional	
a. gain better understanding and appreciation of one another through sharing job related issues and concerns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. know one another better	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. improve communications	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. as a classified staff person, that I make a difference	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. gain better knowledge and understanding of the College structure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. develop purposes and solutions to concerns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. become a more effective and involved member of the Sierra College family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

- |  |           |          |                  |
|--|-----------|----------|------------------|
|  | No Change | Improved | Greatly Improved |
|--|-----------|----------|------------------|
2. The purpose of the retreat is to encourage each participant to feel more enthusiastic, interested and valued. How well did this retreat meet this purpose for you?
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Shall we repeat? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ If yes, what topics, issues, format, frequency, etc. would you suggest.
4. General Comments: (expectations, retreat planning, location and facilities, suggestions for improvements)